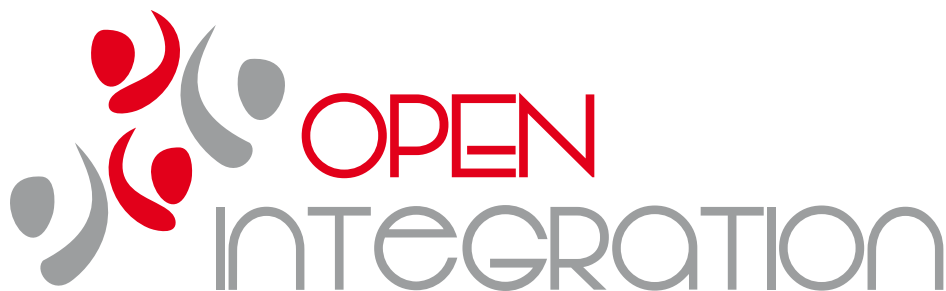




EUROPEAN UNION  
Asylum, Migration  
and Integration Fund

THE JOHN PAUL II  
CATHOLIC  
UNIVERSITY  
OF LUBLIN

**KUL**  
1918



# Newsletter<sup>#6</sup>

OTWARTA INTEGRACJA/OPEN INTEGRATION

[www.kul.pl/otwartaintegracja](http://www.kul.pl/otwartaintegracja)

## Dear Readers!

The time for the sixth newsletter of the „Open Integration” Project has come. This time it presents a summary and at the same time acknowledgements to everyone involved in the implementation of the project. The editorial board of the last issue is composed of the Project Team that wish to share with you their personal experiences. Enjoy!

# FOREIGNERS-FRIENDLY UNIVERSITY

## A SUMMARY OF THE “OPEN INTEGRATION” PROJECT

First so comprehensive project of such kind in Lublin, a package of classes and activities for foreigners – this indeed is the “Open Integration” project. We are used to associate projects funded from the European Union only with the Polish language courses, this is a misguided belief. The mentioned project offered a set of classes on Polish history and culture, Polish language courses, trainings of skills needed on the labor market, the so-called “Orientation Week” for newcomers, or the Summer School „Protection of Migrants’ Rights”. Moreover, each student had an opportunity to use our advice on their stay in Poland, such as dealing with formalities in various offices.



Students taking part in the project had a unique chance to get involved into the life of our University through participation in numerous events organized within it. The integration often began with daily visits in our common place of integration for foreign and international students, the so-called *Common Room*. The project gave a possibility of participation in and co-organizing thematic events concerning culture and traditions of a particular country, they could also participate in meetings and workshops with interesting people. It is worth noting that representatives of students' organizations also very eagerly participated in the meetings organized under the „Open Integration” Project, increasing the academic aspect of our project even more and showing our participants a way to become more involved in the life of the University. Students from all Lublin universities took part in the project, only confirming the international character of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin and a desire for inter-university cooperation in Lublin.

The leitmotif from the early stages of creating and later of implementing of the project was that the more we will explain about ourselves, the better we will be understood and the better the students and other persons will feel that they are most welcome here. Today we see measurable effects of it and we wish to share with you the outcomes of our efforts.





## A WORD FROM THE PROJECT MANAGER

The „Open Integration” Project is addressed to foreigners from outside of the European Union. At first it had purely academic profile and participants came mostly from KUL, next from UMCS, Lublin University of Technology and other universities from Lublin. Enabling the participation of people from outside of the group of students let us direct our activities to workers, job seekers and high school students. Over 600 students have participated in the project, including more than 200 in the Polish language course, more than 60 in integrative and cultural trainings, 60 in trainings of skills needed on the labor market, 46 newcomers took part in the Orientation Week, 60 foreigners in the Summer School „Protection of Migrants’ Rights”, and a total of over 300 students benefited from being a part of our Common Room. Moreover 200 people came for advice of our assistants for integration and legalization, a total of over 600 advices were given. Who are our participants? These are people of various ages, starting from high school students to adults, coming from 46 countries of almost all continents, in this the most (over 2/3) come from Ukraine, and moreover



from: China, Belarus, Nigeria, Kazakhstan, India, Georgia, Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chechnya, Ethiopia, the Philippines, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Cameroon, Canada, Kenya, Columbia, Congo, South Korea, Lebanon, Morocco, Mexico, Moldova, Pakistan, Panama, Russia, Rwanda, Salvador, Thailand, Taiwan, Tunisia, Turkey, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Vietnam and Zimbabwe. Our participants shared with us various information on their countries of origin during our events (inter alia the African Day, Ukrainian Day), or were involved as volunteers in the project activities (newsletter, Common Room).





For implementing our actions we created a team of people, that was changing, developing, but constantly cooperated for foreigners. This is everyday work, requiring engagement and creativity. I would like to enumerate and thank for fruitful cooperation: Ms. Anna Tarnowska-Waszak, Program Expert, who prepared the concepts of trainings, language courses, Orientation Weeks and other activities; Anna Kosińska, PhD and Sławomir Łukasiewicz, Hab. PhD, Program Leaders, responsible especially for the Summer School and 6 prepared newsletters; Kasia Stępnia, first Project Manager; Ania Przybyła, Marlena Struś and Maria Moroniak, directly contacting foreigners on a daily-basis and taking care of the Project documentation; Mr. Assef Sallom holding a position of the Program Guardian; Emil Wojtaluk, Program Guardian and the editor of the project newsletter, Assistant of the Program Leader and Volunteers' Leader; Monika Wilczek, Jerzy Wójcik and Witalij Rosowski providing advice to foreigners in everyday matters and informing students about possibilities of participation in the project; Anna Kowalczyk technically designing the newsletter, taking care of the project website, the author of our project logo; Monika Krajewska, Kamil Maliński, Agnieszka Urawska and Marta Wiślińska dealing with financial settlements; Katarzyna Boguta, group carer during the Orientation Week; all lecturers of the trainings, language courses, Summer School and Orientation Week. And *the last but not least*,

I would like to list and thank all the volunteers for our cooperation:  
Oleksandra Aleksandrova, Monika Atras, Dana Dobryanska, Luiz do Valle Miranda, Kinga Hodór, Franciszka Jabłczyńska, Olga Kosińska, Paulina Kotynia, Dorota Kowalska, Mariia Kozak, Vitalii Makhanets, Maryna Marchenko, Nazar Meliukh, Vira Orel, Oleksandra Seredynska, Veronika Sharhalo, Agnieszka Szeszel, Konstancja Szkudlarek, Teresa Ulianytska, Tetiana Voloshyn, Basia Zak, Aleksandra Zielińska and Patrycja Żuławska, also to Valerian Karchava, supporting us on various occasions.

I would like to thank the Authors of the Project concept, in particular Ms. Anna Tarnowska-Waszak, Dr. Anna Kosińska and Dr. Tomasz Sieniow.

I also thank other people, whose kindness contributed to the success of the project.

Kamil Dębiński

*Project Manager of the „Open Integration” Project*





# WHY THE “OPEN INTEGRATION”?

*“Thank you so much; this program helped me a lot”, “From this experience we understand Polish culture, history and some good Polish food. So overall my experience is very good”.*

Yes, yes. We were looking forward to see such opinions, and exactly such kind of opinions were contained in anonymous evaluation sheets filled in by the students after one of the key activities in the “Open Integration” – the Orientation Week confirm the validity of our fundamental assumptions for the entire project. We wish its participants – the students from abroad to provide them as much information about Polish culture, introduce them in our reality in the fullest possible way, so that they could get a chance to meet and understand, which as a consequence will lead to integration.

It all started with the talks conducted in the office of the Open University on what activities we should propose, to tell a story about us and our cultural baggage in an accessible way that as a consequence will lead



to overcoming barriers in intercultural communication. Polish language courses were something undisputable, but I was convinced that we should also offer a whole range of other activities, such as meetings devoted to Polish history, contemporary social issues, Polish traditions and customs or the legal system (As Winston Brembeck once said “To know another’s language and not its culture is a very good way to make a fluent fool of oneself”)<sup>1</sup>. It was worth to direct our attention on how to help our graduates in finding their way on the labor market. And what has been created as a consequence of talks, consultations and ideas? A big, academic, diversified in its propositions project covering: The “Orientation Week”, integrative and cultural trainings, Polish language courses, trainings of skills needed on the labor market, Summer School devoted to legal issues connected with migration, an attractive place for meetings offering various activities, called the *Common Room*, but also an opportunity of receiving advice concerning the studies – therefore the activities that take place since many years at the universities in the Western Europe, as well as those completely new. All of them organized on an university-wide scale, first time at our University.

Let me briefly describe few of them, starting with the “Orientation Week”, organized as always at the beginning of the academic year. During which meetings spanning for several hours take place each day, devoted especially to: intercultural communication, Polish history, integrative workshops, legal issues related to migration, showing Lublin, introducing

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<sup>1</sup> Patrick L. Schmidt, *In Search of Intercultural Understanding*, Meridian World Press, 2010, p. 17



the University. Therefore it is a kind of introduction to studying in Lublin. It has been organized twice, wherein for the first time in 2016. Attended by people coming from 9 countries. Final opinions, transmitted verbally, as well as in the questionnaires have provided us reasons for satisfaction and positive emotions, and acquaintances and friendships last up to this day. Almost unchanged program was repeated a year later. It is nice to stress out that it once again received high recognition which was manifested in the evaluation surveys, in which the final score of the activity is: 4,9 (in the scale 0 -5). Part of the issues presented during the Orientation Week have been extended in both the first and the second year in the course of integrative and cultural trainings. The knowledge acquired through participation in such a block of meetings gives long-term effects, noticed gradually, often enabling to reflection during observation and experiencing of the other culture. Creating a program of classes for the whole semester enabled our participants to share some questions with



the lecturers, along with already gained experience in Poland that they discover every day. There was a variety of topics. However, the beginning was always about the Polish history. And trainings of skills needed on the labor market? Those covered issues such as: time management, image building, preparing the application documents, simulation of a job interview or identifying professional potential. In order to reach the largest audience, the classes were conducted in English, sometimes repeated in Polish too. The biggest reward from carrying out our activities within the „Open Integration” has brought and still brings us the satisfaction of those who took part in the project. Great joy and satisfaction.

Anna Tarnowska-Waszak  
*Director of the Open University KUL,  
Program Expert in the “Open Integration” Project*





# “ADVENTURE OF A LIFETIME”

The last newsletter, the time of conclusions, memories, but above all satisfaction from the implementation of the intended plans. The work on the current issue of the newsletter of the „Open Integration” project makes me even more aware of how much we have achieved during its implementation. Due to the fact that it was the first project of such kind carried out by KUL, our work required discovering new, uncharted routes in terms of organization. The expectations were high from the very beginning, and we tried to give even more than 100% of our efforts. Created by us from the very beginning a team of the project volunteers was a key to success. It was thanks to them that we managed to start

with full preparation. Our volunteers are certainly a group of young people experienced in contacting foreign students, who engaged in a lot of promotional activities visiting Lublin dormitories, taking an active part practically at each stage of our actions, in particular creating the Common Room atmosphere. They are the co-authors of the newsletter and during the whole period of the project they were the real „guardian angels” for our participants.

A foreign student is definitely a demanding „client”, what connects with the fact that demands set before the project team were surely not lower. Today I can say with satisfaction that our participants create truly partner relations with us, they treat us as friends and someone they can always ask for an advice on various issues, private or professional. It is a value that cannot be underestimated, it only confirms how important it is to properly receive people, who have often travelled thousands of kilometers to find themselves in a completely new environment. The event that personally demanded the biggest effort from me was certainly the Summer School entitled „Protection of Migrants’ Rights”. Its distinctive element was the







program of activities on legal matters, presented in such a way, that the person without a knowledge on specific legal issues could find itself in the topic. The Summer School took its first shapes under the guidance of Dr. Anna Kosińska, the first Program Leader in the project. During two editions participants were taught on migration and asylum law in the European Union, current problems in protecting human rights in the World and many other subjects, giving them in-depth knowledge on effective ways of protecting their rights. Not only that the classes were conducted in an interactive way, another practical element were the so-called networking visits in offices and institutions working for assisting and integrating foreigners in Lublin, they were: Volunteer Centre in Lublin, Border Guards Unit in Lublin, Center for the Meeting of Cultures, The Rule of Law Institute Foundation, the Lublin City Hall and Voivodeship Office in Lublin.

To conclude, the implementation of the „Open Integration” project was a lesson for life for me. Not only because of the scope of duties that rested on the entire project team, but also from the perspective of my professional development. Hundreds of foreigners „passed through our hands”

throughout the entire period of implementation, thanks to which we could incredibly broaden our knowledge in the field of intercultural communication. We have made many friends and developed our organizational skills. Another element, for which this „adventure” was unforgettable for me was that in fact, it was my first professional job, I previously worked with foreigners as a volunteer. Thanks to this project today I certainly feel richer with extraordinary experiences. On that occasion I would like to thank all of those, who believed in me and gave me a chance to be in the place where I am now. In my personal opinion the greatest value of the project were all those smiling people, whom we had a chance to meet and assist them. What we have worked out here during the project lasts until today, all friendships created during various activities continues. There is no greater reward than to see fully integrated, confident and satisfied participants in the corridors of our *Alma Mater*. Thank you and see you again!

Emil Wojtaluk  
*Program Guardian,  
Assistant of the Program Leader*



# EVENTS ORGANIZED WITHIN THE „OPEN INTEGRATION” PROJECT



It's been a fruitful time in our Common Room! For the whole period of implementation of the "Open Integration" project our daily meetings were often interrupted by special events, interesting trips and meetings with extraordinary people. Let us introduce you to our activities of the past two years!





## AFRICAN DANCE EVENT

First event in the framework of our integration has been organized on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May 2016. It was a show of African Dance in the courtyard of KUL. A short video coverage is available here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RyZjG\\_spX68](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RyZjG_spX68)



## A DAY IN SYRIA

Another organized event was „A Day in Syria” which took place on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2016, during which Assef Salloom has presented some interesting facts on his country of origin. The meeting was varied with a musical accent prepared by the host himself.





## A MOVIE FROM IRAN: „ABOUT ELLY”

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of May 2016 we went on a trip of Iranian cinematography. After watching the movie it was the time for discussion on our impressions from the display.

## CHRISTMAS EVENING 2016

In December 2016 we had a chance to host over 30 participants of our project during the Christmas Evening. The meeting started from introducing students into Polish Christmas traditions, after that together with the project team and our volunteers students shared a Christmas wafer and wished each other all the best. A food was prepared by volunteers and participants. Our students even sang Polish Christmas carols and Christmas hit songs played all over the world. Despite that the meeting lasted over 3 hours it could be felt, that events like this are desired by international





students. They are an excellent occasion to integrate intercultural environment of students and get to know each other. The only motivator to finish the meeting was a need to close the University in late hours. For a wonderful atmosphere and a lot of kind words just thank you very much!

## FRENCH EVENING

On the 18th of January 2017 we organized a thematic evening devoted to French cuisine and culture. The meeting was lead by Barbara Zak, volunteer of the Open Integration project, who was raised in France. All started from a presentation of information and interesting facts about France, on the occasion we have received a lot of questions from our students. After the presentation the time has come for tasting of French snacks, such as cheese or cakes.





## FAREWELL OF A GROUP OF STUDENTS FROM KAZAKHSTAN

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of February 2017 we said goodbye to a group of students from Kazakhstan who came to study at KUL in the summer semester 2016/2017 under international exchange program.

## WORKSHOP: PHOTOGRAPHY AS A TOOL TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER



On 27th of March our special guest Barbara Lebedowicz, ACC ICF coach taught us how to use our personal photos to communicate with other people in the process of introducing to one another. We learned how to improve our interpersonal skills and embrace other people's points of view on our first impression. It was a great lesson for us to learn that everyone has got his way of understanding the world that surrounds us, which will surely improve our future integration!

## **MY BEST SUMMER VACATIONS: NEW YORK & WASHINGTON D. C. BY EMIL**

Thanks to Emil we had a chance to cross the ocean and see the East Coast of the USA without moving from the Common Room! That evening we took a walk down the streets, saw photos and videos of these two famous American cities. We also learned some useful tips on getting and applying for visa, taking a flight to the US and picking the most impressive attractions. Next time we are definitely going with Emil!





## UKRAINIAN DAY

On 26th of April a big group of our participants from Ukraine, in cooperation with the OI Team, prepared a special, Ukraine-themed evening. Our friends introduced us to the culture, geography and curiosities of this beautiful land. We had a lot of fun singing local songs together, tasting food from different parts of the country and even learned how to make a folk doll-lalka motanka!





## AFRICAN DAY

It was a big challenge, but we made it! We managed to unite central and southern parts of the continent in one evening! Our participants with cooperation with our team took us on a trip to Africa without moving from Lublin. We experienced unforgettable cooking performance, listened to local songs and watched a folk dance show. After that we tasted delicious traditional homemade dishes. If you ever wanted to taste a worm-regret that you hadn't been there on 19th of May!

## A MEETING WITH PROF. BOGUSŁAW MAREK

On 25th of May we had a great pleasure to host a real Officer of the Order of the British Empire and what's more, a scientist, inventor, traveler and social activist. Professor Marek told us about his excursions to Nepal, his activity and experience in working for the blind, and showed some of his inventions used by him daily.



The meeting was extremely interesting and inspirational!



## WORKSHOP: RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN EUROPE

On 24th of May our special guest, Michał Zawiślak, PhD encouraged us to discuss on a quite difficult but also very interesting topic. Thanks to him we had an opportunity to exchange our opinions on religious freedom and its consequences in Europe. Our participants coming from various countries, cultures and backgrounds were pleased to be a part of the discussion!



# GET INVOLVED! STUDENTS' ORGANIZATIONS AT KUL

Our participants had a chance to discover various ways of using their time in a very productive way. The guests, including leaders of university circles, associations and organizations, introduced them to the world of social activity within our University. Thanks to them we know that studying is not only about learning and partying :)



## BONFIRE AT SKANSEN

To start the springtime in a good way we decided to organize a bonfire at The Lublin Open Air Village Museum. We were having sausages, talking, laughing, playing guitar and singing, but most of all, we had a lot of fun cherishing wonderful weather together!





## WSEI-KUL INTEGRATIVE PARTY

On 13th of June we met both to promote the project and have some fun together. We organized karaoke evening with live music played by the band "Bez Próby". It was fun!

## WHY KUL? A MEETING WITH REV. PROF. ANDRZEJ SZOSTEK

Our last event before vacations was a meeting with rev. prof. Andrzej Szostek, Rector of KUL in the years 1998-2004. During a meeting entitled „WHY KUL?” he shared with us his experiences connected with studying at KUL, also creating a long discussion with our participants. A meeting was held on 21st of June 2017.



## CHRISTMAS EVENING 2017

In December 2017 we have organized the second Christmas evening for our participants. Traditionally we shared Christmas wafer, presented our



Polish Christmas traditions, international students have also presented Christmas traditions of their own countries.







Summing up numerous events and not listed here cultural events organized outside of the University we truly thank you for your support and fruitful cooperation in creating such a wonderful atmosphere. We would like to thank all participants in particular, volunteers and special guests honoring our meetings. We hope that the bond we have developed with our participants will last further, and we surely will not forget this great adventure. Thank you!

Photos: Adrianna, Brzozowska, Nataliia Dmytruk, Vako Karchava, Maria Moroniak, Patricius Neonnub, Emil Wojtaluk





# FACES OF THE PROJECT



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*Thank You  
And See You Again!*





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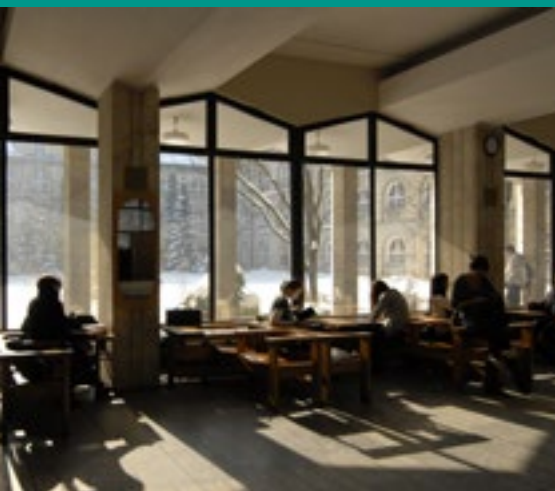
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